

There is a large brass plaque outside the office of the Commandant of Cadets, listing among the responsibilities of the office the requirement “to develop [in cadets] the qualities and attributes of leadership with emphasis on character as exemplified by integrity, morality, discipline and a strong sense of duty and responsibility.” West Point begins with a highly motivated student who arrives expecting an intense developmental experience focused on inculcating values of duty, honor and country. Tactical officers and noncommissioned officers offer mature role models who represent the expectations of the Academy and the Army and hold cadets responsible for high standards of discipline, drill, physical conditioning, appearance and accountability. There are other important initiatives and organizations within USCC directed toward nurturing values of discipline, service and character that mark the West Point graduate. Among these are the new Military Science curriculum, the concept of Officership that it embodies and the many activities of the William E. Simon Center for the Professional Military Ethic.

My last letter (November/December 2003) described the new Military Science curriculum. A most important feature of the revitalization of Military Science as a part of the academic curriculum is its ethical content and explicit focus on *Officership*, “the practice of being a commissioned Army leader.” In this respect, Military Science instruction is presented in harmony with a cross-academy effort, under the Cadet Leader Development System, to frame everything we do within a single notion of what an officer must be as the desired goal of the cadet development process. The yearling course on The Commissioned Army Leader, for example, builds self-consciously on both the cadet summer experiences at Camp Buckner and the content of the plebe general psychology course, PL 100, taught by the Department of Behavioral Science and Leadership. PL 100

lays the cornerstone for cadet instruction on Officership for the Academy by introducing Plebes to The Army Concept of Officership in an academic setting and reinforcing it in every lesson throughout the course. The Army Concept of Officership, as it happens, was drafted for the Army by a team representing a number of West Point academic departments and Academy programs under the leadership of the Director of the William E. Simon Center for the Professional Military Ethic. It was drafted in conjunction with the Center for Army Leadership at Fort Leavenworth and Army Accessions Command at Fort Monroe, in response to the Army Training and Leader Development Study findings. Today there is no question that the Academic Departments and Department of Military Instruction are in the same fight, providing cadets a common set of professional values and a common intellectual and practical framework for thinking about the personal implications of following the officer's calling.

The William E. Simon Center for the Professional Military Ethic, within USCC, plays a vital role in cadet character development, first of all by providing institutional oversight and support for the cadet-administered Honor and Respect Programs. The Simon Center depends for most of its funding on the generous support of external donors. A key member of the Center is the Visiting Scholar in Professional Military Ethics, currently General (Retired) Fred Franks, USMA '59. General Franks advises the Center and mentors the cadet Honor and Respect Staffs. He has organized and chairs a Senior Leader Panel that brings into the Academy a range of active duty and retired officers who share their experiences and advice with cadets about the nature of professional ethics and the requirements of being a military leader. General Franks has served as a vital link engaging West Point in wider Army efforts to better define the content of the officer's

profession. He has also provided experienced and detached strategic vision and advice to the Academy Leadership on a range of institutional issues. The Class of 1966 has pledged the necessary funding to institutionalize his chair in perpetuity beginning in 2007.

In addition to enabling the Cadet Honor and Respect programs, the Simon Center organizes and coordinates a Values Education Program for cadets, taught by cadets and volunteer officers from throughout the Academy. The Center offers outreach to other university Honor programs and conducts the annual Class of 1970 Conference on Ethics in America that draws in Chief Executive Officers from business and students and faculty from around the country to address the need for and nature of professional ethics. With the addition of two visiting scholars with interests in Officership, developmental psychology and ethical decision making, the Center is playing a larger role as a resource for the Academy and Army on issues of leader assessment and development. The Center is leading a Tri-Service Academy initiative to rewrite The Armed Forces Officer, a handbook composed originally by S. L. A. Marshall and formerly presented to cadets and midshipmen as they prepared to take their place as officers. Simon Center faculty also play a role teaching cadets and focusing attention on ethical questions of importance to the health of the Academy.

Finally, I want to acknowledge that some of our best role models for high standards of personal character are found among the cadets themselves. Three cadet athletes recently provided stirring examples of the twin values of the warrior ethos and personal integrity that can serve as beacons for us all. During a competition in Axion New Jersey, Cadet Amy Bauer, '06, a cadet tri-athlete, suffered multiple problems with

her bicycle that effectively put her out of the race. She had a flat at about the 5 mile point of the 25 mile bike course, fixed the tire and continued the race. At the 18 mile point, she had a second flat and took a spill that rendered the bike inoperable. Rather than accept defeat, Cadet Bauer pushed her wrecked bike on to finish the remainder of the bike course on foot. Then she ran the six mile foot race, in spite of knowing she had no way to win, the embodiment of the *warrior ethos* to finish the mission in spite of all obstacles. In another vein, last March, in a junior varsity lacrosse game, two Army players, Cadets Pete Cacossa and Chase Morgan, class of '06, demonstrated what honor means in athletic competition when a successful shot by an opponent actually went through the goal and was ruled to have missed by the game officials. Cadets Cacossa and Morgan, knowing the shot had been good, reported the fact rather than accepting an undeserved advantage. At West Point we continue to teach our cadets that it does matter how you win, on the playing field and on the battlefield. Character under pressure is what West Point is all about.